

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Hungary/Soviet Bloc

REPORT

25X1

SUBJECT Zoltán Vas

DATE DISTR.

21 April 1955

NO. OF PAGES

1

DATE OF INFO.

REQUIREMENT

25X1

PLACE ACQUIRED

REFERENCES

25X1

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1. Zoltán Vas, as Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade, is reported to have undertaken to work out the economic program for 1955 in light of changes in the old plan, necessitated by the new Soviet economic policy toward the Satellites.¹ The 1955 plan is one of transition, an experiment, in anticipation of the new coordinated five-year plans of the Soviet Bloc to be initiated in 1956.
2. Hungarian foreign-trade enterprises recently received a directive to the effect that only the first three months of the 1955 plan remained unaltered, while the remainder would be subject to far-reaching changes. Vas has asked the department heads for reports and has been studying them, but he has issued no directives to date.

1. Comment. There are two interpretations of Vas' appointment as Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade. The first holds that the appointment represented an expression of particular confidence in Vas; in fact, he was allowed to bring with him 15 of his closest collaborators. He is supposed to have come to the ministry with orders to "clean up" the confused state of affairs; this is, of course, a reflection on László Ráy as Minister of Foreign Trade, who is expected to be removed from office. The second interpretation holds that Vas' appointment is a demotion, probably the result of the conflict between the forces of Imre Nagy and Vas on one hand and those of Mátyás Rákosi and Ernő Gerő on the other hand.

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